DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 668 CE 054 268

AUTHOR	Ebnet, Jean Januschka; And Others
TITLE	Self-Perceptions of Retired Senior Volunteer Program Members. Annual RSVP Evaluation Report.
INSTITUTION	Greater St. Cloud Retired Senior Volunteer Program, MN.
PUB DATE	Dec 89
NOTE	74p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Life Satisfaction; *Older Adults; Old Old Adults; *Quality of Life; Retirement; *Self Esteem; *Voluntary Agencies; Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS	*Minnesota; *Retired Senior Volunteer Program

ABSTRACT

An evaluation study was undertaken to obtain volunteer workers' perceptions of the impact of such service on their own lives, attitudes, and adjustments. A 20-item questionnaire was included with a quarterly Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) newsletter distributed to 1,075 RSVP members in the Greater St. Cloud area of Minnesota. The responding sample of 328 volunteer workers was compared on basic variables to the total population and accepted as representative. Respondents ranged in age from 60 to 96 years with 45 percent over the age of 75; 85 percent were female; 62 percent were single or widowed; 51 percent had been RSVP volunteers for over 5 years; 31 percent gave 5-10 hours per week and 10 percent gave 10 or more hours per week to volunteer activities. Three-fourths reported themselves to be in good health. Most of the respondents, 96 percent, were satisfied with their volunteer activities. RSVP experiences were perceived to increase their sense of self-worth by 83 percent, to increase their circle of friends by 86 percent, and to help in meeting new persons by 92 percent. The evaluation supported the belief that RSVP enhances the quality of life and well-being of senior volunteers willing to share their time with others. (The document includes a 17-item annotated bibliography and 11 appendices that contain descriptions of RSVP programs, the questionnaires, data tables, and respondents' comments.) (CML)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED316668

SELF - PERCEPTIONS OF
RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM MEMBERS

ANNUAL RSVP EVALUATION REPORT

GREATER ST. CLOUD RSVP

DECEMBER 1989

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S Romanish

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE054268

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the following for their participation and efforts in this year's Program Evaluation.

RSVP Advisory Council Evaluation Committee Members:

Jean Januschka Ebnet, Chair

Dr. Willis Dugan

Sue Emslander

Michelle Stone

RSVP Staff Members:

Silvia Romanish, Susan Schubert, and Intern Cindy Peterson

Volunteer Stations for assisting with survey returns

St. Cloud State University for computer and library services

. . .and all RSVP Volunteers who participated.

Sue Emslander

Sue Emslander
Advisory Council Chairperson

Date 12-19-89

INTRODUCTION

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program provides an opportunity for persons age 60 and over to become usefully involved in the work operations of a wide variety of community-life programs.

More than one thousand senior citizen volunteers in the St. Cloud area share themselves, their skills and experiences of a life-time in the on-going work activities of more than one hundred twenty community agencies.

The process of matching senior persons' interests and special skills with essential, but often unmet needs in community agencies is intended to achieve certain important outcomes:

- utilizing talent that might otherwise go unused;
- meeting needs of agencies to broaden the scope and enrich the quality of their services;
- enhancing the quality of life and well-being of senior persons willing to share their time with others.

Volunteer service is acclaimed as a way to give new meaning to the lives of people. Increasing numbers of nationally and locally supported programs have developed to tap this reservoir of talent for the betterment of community health, welfare and human service enterprises.

Counselors in programs for the aging suggest that involvement in continuing life activities will have a positive effect upon self-esteem and the schievement of a sense of well-being in older persons.

Self-esteem is simply a sense of personal worth, a liking of oneself, and a feeling that one's life and contributions are worthwhile. Self-esteem is an important requirement for effective personal behavior. A prominent advocate of self-theory (Carl Rogers) asserts:

> Every individual develops attitudes about self on the basis of attitudes expressed by significant other people.

Volunteer service provides the opportunity for self-expression and the utilization of one's interests and special skills for the good of others. It is in this context, that the RSVP Evaluation Committee sought through a questionaire survey the perceptions of senior volunteers about the effect their service may have had upon their own lives, attitudes and adjustments.

Some Demographic Trends

Recent research literature suggests that elderly persons are not only growing in numbers, but also living longer. The most recent statewide survey conducted by the Wilder Research Foundation indicates that senior citizens also make substantial contributions of volunteers service. Fifty-nine percent of older Minnesotans report they gave help to families, forty-two percent gave service to individuals, and sixty percent volunteered time and skills to organizations. National surveys have indicated that about twenty percent of persons 65 and older were volunteers.

U.S. Census Bureau data reveals that senior citizens, age 65 and older, are the fastest growing segment of our population. In the 1980's, for the first time in our nation's history, the number of Americans over the age of 65 has surpassed the number of teenagers. Thirty million senior citizens now represent twelve percent of our nation's population. As recently as 1950, older persons represented eight percent; but by the year 2050 nearly one-fourth of our projected 310 million population are expected to be persons 65 years of age and over.

Increased life expectancy combined with the nearly 80 million baby boom in two decades following World War II account for a forward moving bulge of older Americans in the up-coming century. In 1900, life expectancy was 47; by 1950 it reached 60; now it is nearly 76; and by the year 2040 the National Institute on Aging projects 75 for men and 83 for women.

Utilizing the reservoir of experience, skill and creative talent of senior citizens will be a major challenge to our changing American social structure, culture and technology in the 21st Century.

Senior citizens are not generally in poor health or unable to care for themselves. Nationally, only one in five older persons describe themselves as having health problems. The Wilder research reported that seventy percent of Minnesota senior citizens rate their health excellent or very good. Only one in every fourteen (7.3%) of Minnesota elderly reside in nursing homes and other institutions. Some reports suggest that the average age for nursing home admissions is not 65 or 70 but age 80. The current RSVP survey in Central Minnesota reveals that 76 percent of the senior respondents rate themselves in good health.

Life Satisfaction and Volunteerism.

A computer search of the AARP data based on life satisfaction and volunteers reported a total of 1388 documents on record from 1978 to 1989. A selective annotated bibliography of related documents was obtained in a print-out of these two subject matter variables.

After a more self-serving period of early retirement years, a substantial and growing number of senior persons, age 60 and over, find volunteer service a route to self-expression through worthy contributions of their time and talents to community agency programs. Improved life-satisfaction in daily life activities and enhanced self-esteem are noted in the results of a number of the research studies reported.

A SELECTIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON VOLUNTEERISM AND LIFE SATISFACTION OF OLDER AMERICANS.

Chambre, Susan M., Correlates of Volunteer Participation by the Elderly, A Final Report, City University of New York, 1985.

An analysis of data from a 1981 Harris survey of 2090 persons over age 60 sought to discover if volunteerism by older persons is the result of role loss in their life style. Strongest predictors of volunteer participation proved to be an active life-style, higher educational attainment, younger age, and a greater feeling of life satisfaction. Study suggests strategies to increase volunteering among elderly.

Delaloye, Joan E., Teaching the Elderly Homebound through Learning Companions, Institute of Study for Older Adults, New York Technical College, Report 1981.

Older adults (N=778) enrolled in continuing education classes shared class content with 667 homebound elders. Positive influences and feelings of life satisfaction were reported.

Dick, H. R. and Friedsam, H. J., Evaluation of a Foster Grandparent Program at Denton State School, Final Report. North Texas State University, Denton, Texas. June 1968.

Positive results included provision of income to needy elderly, psychological satisfaction for foster grandparents, and developmental gains for the children.

Dychtwald, Ken and Flower, Joe., Age Wave, The Challenges and Opportunities of an Aging America, Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc. 1989.

The growing number and potential influence of older persons in America is examined together with the implications and challenges of this trend. In 1900, life expectancy was 47 while today it is 75, and by the years 2000 and 2020 it may reach 80. In 1900, with a population of 76 million, 3 million (4 percent) were elderly 65 and over; by 1950, with a population of 150 million (8 percent) were over age 65; now, with nearly 270 million population, 35 million (13 percent) are elderly; and by the year 2050, the estimated 70 million senior citizens will constitute almost one-fourth of our population. Life styles will change; and the number of senior persons will present a serious challenge of inter-generational relationships.

Fengler, A. P. and Goodrich, N., "Money isn't Everything: Opportunities for Men in a Sheltered Workshop," Gerontologist, Vol. 20: 636-641, December 1980.

An RSVP sponsored workshop provided disabled, elderly men, age 60 to 83, with activities outside their home; meeting once every two weeks on woodworking projects for local community agencies. For participants, the three most important factors in the experience were (1) getting out of the house, (2) being able to help others and (3) being with others. The value of doing something for others grew stronger over the duration of the study.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

Goodman, N., Bley, N. and Dye, D. "The Adjustment of Aged Users of Leisure Programs", American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, Vol. 44: 142-149, January 1974.

An interview study of 103 elderly persons engaged in a community-based leisure time program proved that most satisfaction was gained from programs emphasizing volunteer activities.

Gray, R. M. and Kasteder, "An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of a Foster Grandparent Project", Sociology and Social Science Research, Vol. 54: 81-189, 1970.

Positive results on a life-satisfaction scale were found for elderly volunteers who served mentally retarded children.

Hendricks, Jan, and Brasfield, Linda, Preparing and Utilizing Older Volunteers, University of Kentucky Research Foundation, Center for Developmental Change and Council on Aging, Lexington, Ky. 1986.

Forty older retired volunteers received training in making in-service presentations to community agency personnel who work with the elderly. These older volunteers experienced enhanced self-worth as a byproduct of the credible delivery of training services to agency personnel.

Hunter, K. T. and Linn, M. W., "Psychological Differences between Elderly Volunteers and Non-Volunteers", International Journal of Aging and Human Development, Vol. 12: 205-213, 1980-81.

A sample of 53 persons engaged in volunteer activities and 49 non-volunteers over age 65 were studied for differences in psychosocial characteristics. Results indicated volunteers to be more satisfied with life, had a stronger will to live, and reported fewer somatic, anxious, and depressive symptoms than those who did not engage in volunteer work.

Munson, M. et al, Do Friendly Visiting Programs Help the Homebound Elderly?, A Report, University of Missouri, September 1980.

Compared the efficacy of face-to-face visiting versus telephone visiting in providing assistance to homebound elderly. Results obtained by a life-satisfaction scale were minimal.

Newman, Sally, Vasuder, J. and Onewola, R. "Older Volunteers' Perceptions of the Impact of Volunteering on their Psychological Well-Being", Journal of Applied Gerontology, Vol. 4, No. 2: 123-127, December 1985.

Older persons (N=180) with average age of 64.4, served as school volunteer aides. Two-thirds of this group experienced improvements in life-satisfaction as reported on a questionaire; 75 percent felt better about themselves; and one out of three reported improvements in mental health.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

Newman, Sally, et. al., Report, University of Pittsburgh, 90 p. 1983.

This report by previously cited authors examines the experience of older volunteers in inter-generational programs in schools and their life satisfaction. Instruments included a questionaire, a standardized life satisfaction index (LSIZ), and an interview. Majority of respondents reported improvement in feelings about themselves and their satisfaction with life, as well as providing some structure in volunteer's daily life.

Perrin, C. "Quality of Life Department of a Nursing Home", American Health Care Association Journal, Vol. 6: 43-47, January 1980.

Describes what has come to be accepted currently as a desirable trend in nursing homes to provide a variety of services to meet the needs of residents, particularly, the opportunity to participate in community and institutional activities.

Randell, O. A., "Aging in America Today", Kent Award Lecture, Gerontologist, Vol. 17: 6-11, February 1977.

An early leader recognized the growing strength of the elderly, and the diversity of their talents as a challenge to them for contributing to the common good. Programs which utilize elderly volunteers are viewed as a most healthy social development in recent years.

Shenk, Dena, Some One to Lend a Helping Hand, "The Lives of Rural Older Women in Central Minnesota", Monograph, Research Report, Central Minnesota Council on Aging, Fall 1987.

An intensive study of the aging experience of rural women in Central Minnesota. This qualitative anthropological research examined the life experiences and social support systems of thirty women, age 64-93, through a carefully and sensitively designed interview procedure. Existing personal networks and relationships proved to hold significance over remote formal social support systems.

Todd, m., Davis, K. and Cafferty, T., "Who Volunteers for Adult Development Research?", International Journal of Aging and Human Development, Vol. 18, No. 3, 177-184, 1983-84.

Concludes that women volunteer more readily than men. Reluctance to volunteering often due to fear of strangers, and uncertainty as to how they would be judged.

Walker, J. W., Kimmel, D. C. and Price K. F., "Retirement Style and Retirement Satisfaction", International Journal of Aging and Human Development, Vol. 12: 267-281, 1980-81.

Patterns of post-retirement activities and retirement satisfaction were examined for 1511 recent retirees. Three out of four found retirement generally good and that there is no single retirement style that results in universal satisfaction.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

Wilder Research Foundation, A study of Senior Residents of Minnesota. Publicly reported survey, October 1989.

Minnesota has 722,000 people age 60 and over, representing 17 percent of the state's population. The Wilder Research Foundation conducted the first statewide survey of senior residents since 1971. The survey, conducted from June 1988 to November, included random telephone interviews with 1500 people age 60 and over. The survey findings will be distributed to state and local policy-makers as an aid in planning and charting an agenda for senior citizens issues through the next decade.

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATIOM ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Greater St. Cloud RSVP has been in existence since 1973 and serves older citizens and human care agencies in Stearns, Benton and Sherburne Counties.

During the last fiscal year, March 1988 - April 1989, there were 1,075 enrolled volunteers who contributed 146,335 hours of service to approximately 120 human care agencies. The agencies served are all public or private non-profit agencies/organizations or licensed health care facilities; and offer a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. (See Appendix A for an example of types of agencies and opportunities.

Current statistics on age and gender of Greater St. Cloud Area RSVP volunteers reveal the following:

AGE	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS
60 - 69	274
70 - 79	514
80 - 84	159
85 and over	128
Total	1,075

GENDER	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS
Females	838
Males	237
Total	1,075

Members of the program are diverse, as are their needs and interests, reasons for volunteering, and types of opportunities selected. But if one were to generalize and present a profile describing an RSVP volunteer, it might resemble the following:

> White female in her 70's...widowed, living alone in a non institutional residence...in relatively good health... has a high school education...volunteers about 3 hours per week through RSVP and is also involved in other causes or organizations...prefers an assignment where she will have contact with others and where she will feel useful, needed and appreciated.

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM (continued)

It should also be noted that a portion of the program's volunteers, approximately 75, either live in institutional settings or have some physical limitations that may have prevented them from participating in the written evaluation survey.

METHODOLOGY

The 1989 RSVP Evaluation Sub-committee met for the first time on June 13, 1989. Ideas for evaluation of various aspects of the Greater St. Cloud Retired Senior Volunteer Program were discussed. The decision was reached at this meeting to evaluate the impact of the program on RSVP Volunteers. The approach that would be taken would be to mail all of the active volunteers a survey. The survey would be designed to solicit the volunteer's perception of the impact of the program on them. Following tabulation of the data gained from the mailed surveys, approximately 45 face to face interviews would be completed in an attempt to gain further insight into the impact of the program on volunteers.

The sub-committee met for the second time on June 29th with the goal of the meeting being to develop the specific questions to be included on the survey. The questions were designed to test the assumptions that RSVP volunteerism affects 1. Life satisfaction, 2. Self Esteem. A 20 question survey resulted from this meeting (see Appendix B). Also discussed during this meeting was the manner in which surveys could be distributed and how to encourage a high rate of return. It was decided that the surveys and self addressed envelopes would be included in the quarterly newsletter to be mailed to each volunteer, approximately 1,075 active volunteers. A brief request for participation in the survey was also included in the newsletter (see Apendix C). Several RSVP Volunteer Stations were asked to have survey return boxes available for their volunteers. The stations selected were those that had large numbers of volunteers. Small posters (see Apendix D) and return boxes were provided to those 10 stations agreeing to this arrangement. All surveys were returned on a anonymous and voluntary basis and responses were held confidental by the RSVP office and Evaluation Committee.

The third meeting of the Evaluation Sub-committee was held on August 30th. It was decided at this meeting that time would not allow for the face to face interviews. Another concern that surfaced regarding the face to face interviews was that of appearing to breach the anonymous nature of the mailed surveys. That is, it was felt that those volunteers selected for the face to face interviews might feel their selection was based upon responses to the mailed survey. The survey return rate was 31.3%. During this meeting the returned surveys were reviewed. Dr. Willis Dugan agreed to research and write a preliminary introduction to be used in conjunction with the survey data. Ms. Michelle Stone agreed to have the responses to the survey tabulated. Ms. Jean Januschka Ebnet volunteered to document the Evaluation Committee's methodology for this evaluation.

On October 16th the Evaluation Committee reviewed the data, with particular focus being on those cross tabulations comparisions of interest to the group. Dr. Dugan's introduction was reviewed and he expressed a willingness to research the literature on the topics of senior volunteerism, life satisfaction and self esteem.

The November 13th meeting of the Sub-committee allowed for the study of Dr. Dugan's literature review. Ms. Stone also identified, at this meeting, the appropriate presentation of the data. Ms. Silvia Romanish

METHODOLOGY (continued)

agreed to write a description of the Greater St. Cloud Area Retired Senior Volunteer Program and its volunteers.

The December 4th Sub-committee final meeting allowed for continued data analysis. Of particular concern were Ms. Stone's graphical illustrations of the data. Those graphs which were felt to be most descriptive and interesting were marked for inclusion in the final evaluation format. Ms. Stone agreed to summarize the data. Ms. Romanish volunteered to write the evaluation conclusion and recommendations. Conclusion and recommendations suggestions were offered by the committee.

Typing and sequential compilation of the evaluation was completed by Ms. Susan Schubert, RSVP Secretary.

DATA ANALYSIS

Sample

All members of the St. Cloud Area Retired Senior Volunteer Program received the survey in their June newsletter and were asked to return the surveys to the RSVP office. Of these 1,075 RSVP volunteers, 328 or 31.38% responded to the survey. As can be seen in Figure 1. (see Appendix E) the sample is fairly representative of the total St. Cloud area RSVP membership. Volunteers ages 60-69 years, 80-85 years, and 85 years and older are proportionately represented in the survey sample, however the largest age group, 70-79 years seems to be fairly under represented in the survey sample. Additionally, males are slightly under represented in the sample survey as Figure 2. (see Appendix F) indicates. While males represent almost 25% of the total RSVP membership, fewer than 20% of the male volunteers responded to the survey. Nonetheless, the St. Cloud Area RSVP volunteers who participated in the survey designed to investigate the effect of RSVP participation upon their personal lives, was enough representative of the entire membership to warrant further analysis of the data.

Table 1. (see Appendix G) provides the demographic profile of the sample for this study. Of the 328 RSVP members who participated, most were between 70-79 years of age (45%); women (84.8%); widowed (51.8%); have a high school education (45.1%); are currently retired (89.3%); and perceive themselves in good health (76.2%). These data are consistent with the generalized profile provided elsewhere in this report.

Survey

The survey questionaire (see Appendix B) was designed to consider the contribution the St. Cloud Area Retired Senior Volunteer Program held for the volunteer membership. Specifically, the survey questions were directed to gain insight as to "how RSVP volunteer activities have helped the volunteer". Table 1. (see Appendix G) presents the overall responses to each question. As can be seen, the responses are overwhelmingly positive. Most of the participants in the survey were satisfied with their volunteer activities (95.4%) and found their volunteer activities worth while (96.6%). Moreover, the respondents perceived that their RSVP affiliation increased their sense of self-worth (83.2%); increased their circle of friends (85.7%); helped in the meeting of new people (92.4%); provided opportunities for sharing ideas with others (75.3%); enabled the volunteer to use skills and abilities (72.3%); and has had an effect on the volunteers awareness of current events (71% more aware). The volunteers were somewhat less positive to questions concerning RSVP effect toward improving their health (30.5% helped improve health, while 60% responded no or don't know); toward feeling more positive about the future (55.5% yes, while 44.5% responded no or don't know, or did not respond); and finally toward planning for the future (44.5% were more likely to plan for the future as a result of RSVP volunteer activities, while 55.5% responded no, don't know, or did not respond). In response to a question (#15) about becoming more active in ones community as result of RSVP activiites, the respondents were almost twice as likely to respond affirmatively (63.1%).

DATA ANALYSIS (continued)

In addition to these positive responses to the structured questions in the survey, the RSVP volunteers were extremely positive in the "open-ended" question provided at the end of the survey which asked the respondents "to comment on how RSVP volunteer experiences have affected (ones) lifestyle". The short content analysis demonstrates the overall nature of these responses. (The accumulated "open-ended" comments are provided in Appendix H).

Content Analysis

In analyzing the content of the comments volunteers offered about the effect RSVP experiences have on their lifestyle, it seems that there are a number of responses that could be grouped in certain categories. The following is an indication of those groupings and the number of responses given for each.

Grouping According to Content	Number of Responses
1. Social aspects...being with others, meeting new people, becoming more outgoing.	36
2. Feeling better about oneself... feel happier, improved my mental health, feel useful, feel needed and appreciated, helped me overcome loneliness and grief.	33
3. Staying active, keeping busy... something to do, gets me out of the house, something to look forward to, motivating.	31
4. Enjoyment, satisfaction... its rewarding, vitalizing, enjoy helping others.	20
5. Awareness of those less fortunate...	8
6. Opportunity to use skills or learn new skills...	3

The comments made were overwhelmingly positive, with only two being on the negative side ("am a little tired of volunteering"..."need a new volunteer job or a paid job") and five more or less neutral ("have not been in long enough to tell"...etc).

Comparative Analysis

A short comparative analysis was conducted to see if the data offered any further understanding about the nature of ones volunteer experiences according to the amount of time per week an individual volunteers (commitment), and/or according to the number of years the respondent has

DATA ANALYSIS (continued)

been a participant with the St. Cloud Area RSVP Program (affiliation). For this analysis, the questions were grouped into three basic clusters or "scales"*: satisfaction scale, self reflection scale, and social interaction scale. (*These scales were informally constructed after data were collected for the purposes of comparison only, and therefore, should not be interpreted as having been constructed as statistically valid scales).

First, however, a look at the overall comparison of commitment by affiliation is in order. Figure 3. (see Appendix I) shows the relationship of the hours worked per week by the total years involved with the St. Cloud Area RSVP. The stacked histogram demonstrates the cumulative frequency for both hours per week worked and total years involved. Interestingly, the fewer years a volunteer is affiliated with the St. Cloud Area RSVP, the fewer hours they are likely to work per week. This trend is in keeping with the philosophy of the RSVP Program for gradual involvement and commitment in accordance with the particular volunteers wishes. Additionally, note those volunteers affiliated with the program between 5-10 years are less likely to work more than 10 hours per week, than are those respondents with the program less than 5 years and those with the program more than 10 years. A rational for this trend is not completely understood. It is possible that this is more representative of the sample, than a trend with the total RSVP members overall.

Next, a look at the RSVP volunteers affiliation (years) and commitment (time worked per week) were compared with the three scales identified above. For each of the scales a stacked histogram showing the relative frequency of each question included in the scale were constructed. Only respondents who answered the questions "yes" are included in these comparisons.

The satisfaction scale groups questions 10 (satisfied?), 12 (self-worth?) and 13 (worth while?) as these three questions were constructed so to indicate the overall enjoyment or pleasure gained from RSVP volunteer activities. Figure 4 (affiliation) and Figure 5 (commitment) are, for the most part, proportionately equivalent (see Appendix J). In other words, respondents are equally likely to be satisfied with their involvement in the St. Cloud Area RSVP regardless of either their affiliation or their commitment.

Similar findings were demonstrated for the Self Reflection Scale. Questions 16 (shares ideas and information with others), 17 (more positive perceptions about the future), 18 (more likely to plan for the future), and 20 (more aware of current events) were included in this scale constructed to look at the effect of RSVP volunteer activities on the volunteers perceptions about themselves and their place in the world. Again, Figure 6 (affiliation) and Figure 7 (commitment) are proportionately similar regarding Self Reflection (see Appendix K). In Figure 6, however, persons affiliated with RSVP less than 1 year are slightly less likely to respond they are more positive about the future as a result of their RSVP activities. And, persons affiliated with RSVP more than 10 years are slightly more likely to respond that they plan

more for the future as a result of their activities. While these proportional differences are relatively small, nonetheless, it seems reasonable to conclude that a volunteer becomes more positive about the future and more likely to plan for the future as a result of continued affiliation with RVSP.

Finally, the Social Interaction scale was considered. Questions 11 (increase circle of friends), 14 (helped meet new people), 15 (helped become more active in community), and 19 (enable use of skills and abilities) determine the Social Interaction scale. These questions were attempting to consider the effect of RSVP volunteer activities on the individuals interaction and involvement with others and with their community. As can be seen in Figure 8 and Figure 9 (see Appendix L), respondents were equally likely to be socially involved regardless of their affiliation (years) or their commitment (time worked). In other words, the effect of RSVP volunteer activities on social interaction are equally likely regardless of the amount of time a volunteer works per week, or the number of years the volunteer is affiliated with the program.

Summary

Each of the data analysis presented in this report demonstrates the overwhelmingly positive effects of RSVP volunteer activities for the volunteers, at least for the St. Cloud RSVP volunteers who chose to participate in this study. The initial data analysis (Table 1.) demonstrates the positive responses for each of the questions asked in the survey. Over half of all respondents responded positively to all questions except in regards to RSVP activities improving ones health (question #9) and resulting in more planning for the future (question #18). These positive responses were further supported by the information provided in responses to the "open-ended" question which provided for comments on the effects of RSVP activities on ones lifestyle. And finally, the comparative analysis demonstrates that the volunteers who participated in this study were equally likely to respond positively on each of the constructed scales: satisfaction, self reflection and social interaction, regardless of their affiliation (years) or commitment (hours worked). In short, it appears from these data that the St. Cloud Area RSVP program has an overall positive effect for its members.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this evaluation was to give RSVP members an opportunity, through a questionaire survey, to express their perceptions about the effect RSVP volunteering has upon their own lives, attitudes and adjustments. It has been possible to demonstrate the success of the program based on statistics such as number of volunteers involved, hours of service contributed and agency needs met. But what about the intrinsic rewards senior volunteers receive by serving others? What impact does the program have on the quality of their lives? It was hoped that the survey would answer some of these questions.

The questionaire was mailed to all active volunteers in their quarterly RSVP newsletter. Although less than half of the volunteers responded (328 out of 1,075), the sample seems to be representative of the total population. As can by seen by the data analysis, the responses were overwhelmingly positive. Not only were most of the participants satisfied with their volunteer activities and found their activities worthwhile, but they also perceived that RSVP experiences increased their sense of self-worth, increased their circle of friends and helped in meeting new people.

When given an opportunity to "comment on how RSVP volunteer experiences have affected (their) lifestyle", they shared numerous positive feelings such as:

> "Volunteering maintains my position self-image and self worth...makes me feel useful and important."
>
> "I was very depressed, feeling sorry for myself until I started volunteering...now I am looking forward to getting out each day and helping others".

It seemed interesting to compare the data and determine correlations between life satisfaction and level of involvement with RSVP such as hours worked per week or number of years enrolled. The fact that there were no significant correlation between these factors, seems to indicate that any amount of commitment and length of affiliation with RSVP is beneficial.

The information gained by this evaluation supports the belief that RSVP enhances the quality of life and well-being of senior volunteers willing to share their time with others. The many positive responses were an inspiration to staff and will prove useful when recruiting new volunteers, in approaching additional funding sources, and promoting the program. All in all, it has been very worthwhile evaluation project.

APPENDIX A

STATION	NUMBER VOLUNTEERS ASSIGNED	TYPES OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS	DATE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT LAST UPDATED
American Cancer Society	40	Phone calling, Stuffing kits and other assembly projects, Area Chairperson, Daffodil Day Assistant, Correspondence Assistant, Jail and Bail Volunteers, Office Volunteer.	June 6, 1989
American Lung Association	1	Office Assistant.	Sept. 19, 1989
American Red Cross	5	Nursing Services, Blood Donor Aide, Blood Donor Callers, Disaster Relief Volunteer, Leadership Volunteer.	March 8, 1989
Benedict Village	8	Entertainment Volunteers, Paper Recycling Assistant, Reading Discussion Leader, Dietary Assistant, Piano Player, Party Helper, Speaker/Presenter, Exercise Assistant, Plant Care Assistant.	March 29, 1989
Benton County Health Services	10	Clinic Aide, Receptionist/Clerical Volunteer, Immunization Clinic Assistant, Assembly Projects.	June 14, 1989
Benton County Historical Society	2	Indexer to organize historical records, Paper Clipper Tour Guide, History in a Trunk Project Volunteer.	Dec. 14, 1988
Benton County Social Services	5	Foster Care Case Review Volunteer, Volunteer Driver, Friendly Visitor, Office Assistant	May 15, 1989
Big Lake Library	1	Library Assistant, Story Hour Assistant	Aug. 25, 1989
Boys and Girls Club	1	Youth Guidance Workers, Drivers, Carpenter, Resource Volunteers to share talents and hobbies, Kidstop Assistant.	Feb. 9, 1989
Boy Scouts 20	16	Newsletter Assemblers, Clerical Assistant	November 20,1985

STATION	NUMBER VOLUNTEERS ASSIGNED	TYPES OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS	DATE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT LAST UPDATED
St. Cloud Area Senior Fun Singers	22	Singer/Entertainer, Volunteer Record Keeper, Music Librarian, Volunteer Sewer.	Sept. 18, 1989
St Cloud Area Legal Services	1	Filing Assistant, Volunteer Attorney, Lay Advocate/ Paralegal, Senior Law Project Assistant.	June 27, 1989
St. Cloud Community Arts Council	7	Clerical Helper, Picture Frame Project Volunteers.	April 20, 1989
St. Cloud Hospital	78	Information Desk Attendant, Occupational Therapy Volunteer, Physical Therapy Volunteer, Same Day Surgery Assistant, Recreational Therapy Volunteer, Surgery Hostess, Public Relations Assistant, Nursing Service Volunteer, Admissions Escort, Coffee Shop Volunteer, X-Ray Transporter, Gift Shop Volunteer, Friendly Visitors, Special Projects Volunteer, Office Clerical Helper, Health Services Assistant.	April 11, 1989
St. Cloud Manor Nursing Home	39	Bingo Assistant, Newsletter Volunteer, Typist, Escort, Entertainers, Woodworkers, Sing-A-Long Assistant, Manicurists, Shopper, Library and Book Cart Volunteer, Helping Hands Volunteer, Discussion Group Leader, Knitter/Crocheter, Sewer, Beauticians Assistants, Happy Hour Volunteer, Special Outing Assistant, Nourishment Host/Hostess, Friendly Visitors, Card Players, Craft Group Assistant, Cooking Group Leader, Assistant Reading Group Leader.	July 26, 1989
St. Cloud Recreation Department	5	Santa Callers, Resource Speakers, Park Guide/Interpretive Center Host/Hostess, Day Camp Volunteer, Office Helper.	Jan. 20, 1989
St. Cloud State University	87	Gerontology Resource Center Volunteer, Speakers, Aging Institute Assistants, Assemblers.	March 8, 1989
St. Cloud Symphony Orchestra	10	Assemblers/Mail Projects Volunteers	Aug. 2, 1989

STATION	NUMBER VOLUNTEERS ASSIGNED	TYPES OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS	DATE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT LAST UPDATED
Special Community Projects	20	Special Olympics Volunteers, Conference Workers, Drug Use Consultant, Telephone Volunteers, Research Volunteer, Puppeteer, Note Taker.	June 13, 1989
Stearns County Community Health Services	17	Hearing and Vision Screening Assistant, Assembly Projects, Special Projects, Volunteer Visitor, Employee Health Screening, Flu Clinic Assistant, Driver.	Aug. 24, 1989
Stearns County Heritage Center	14	Archival Research Assistant, Admissions Receptionist, Gift Shop Attendent, Tour Guide, Resource Volunteers to Demonstrate Arts and Crafts, Mail Committee Member	June 28, 1989
Stearns County Jail	6	Employability Skills Educator, Librarian, Presenter.	Jan. 11, 1989
Stearns County Social Services	19	Volunteer Drivers, Friendly Visitors, Sewers/Knitters, Clerical Worker, Special Projects, Visitation Volunteer.	April 13, 1989
Treasure Chest	6	Color Coordinator, Markers, Pullers, Volunteer Driver/ Transporter.	Aug. 9, 1989
Tri County Action Programs	100	Intake Workers, Packagers/Distributors, Drivers/Deliverers, Registration Volunteers, Typist, Clinic Assistants, Energy Assistance Program Assistants, WIC Office Volunteer	Jan. 3, 1989
Tri County Humane Society	1	Education Volunteer, Shelter Receptionist, Animal Caretaker.	Sept. 21, 1989
United Way of the St. Cloud Area	23	Assembly Projects, Special Projects Volunteers, Office Assistant, Newspaper Clipper, Phone Callers.	May 18, 1989
V.A. Medical Center 24	35	Assemblers, Recreation Assistant, Clerical Assistants, Friendly Visitors, Escort Service, Entertainer, Media Center Volunteer, Dietetic Office Volunteer.	Nov. 13, 1989

APPENDIX B

Dear Volunteer,

Your work as an RSVP volunteer has helped many people in your community. We appreciate so much the contribution you have made in helping others. Now, we would like to know how your RSVP volunteer activities have helped you. Please take a few minutes to help us by answering the following questions--we thank you for your help!

First, a few questions about you: (just "X" the appropriate answers)

1. To what age group do you belong? _____ 60-65 yrs _____66-70 _____71-75 _____76-80 _____81-85 _____86-90 ____91-95 or _____ 96 yrs and over

2. What is your gender? _____female _____male

3. What is your marital status? _____single _____married _____widowed

4. What about your education? _____high school _____vocational school _____ college _____graduate school _____self educated

5. What is/was your occupation: _____

Are your retired? _____yes _____no

6. How long have you been an RSVP Volunteer (approximately)? _____less than 1 year _____1-5 yrs _____5-10 yrs _____over 10 years

7. How many hours (on average) do you volunteer each week? _____less than 2 hours _____2-4 hours _____5-10 hours _____10 hours plus

Now we would like to ask you a few questions about your experiences:

8. Are you in good health? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

9. As an RSVP volunteer has your health improved? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

10. Are your RSVP volunteer activities satisfying? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

11. Has your RSVP volunteer work increased your circle of friends? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

12. Has your RSVP volunteer work increased your sense of self worth? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

13. Is the time spent in RSVP volunteer activities worth while? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

14. Has your RSVP volunteer work helped you meet new people? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

15. Has your RSVP volunteer work helped you become more active in your community? ____yes ____no ____D/K

16. Have RSVP activities provided more opportunity for sharing ideas and information with others? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

17. As a result of your RSVP activities are you more positive about the future? ____yes ____no _____Don't know

18. As a result of your RSVP activities do you plan more for the future? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

19. Does your RSVP work enable you to use more of your skills and abilities? _____yes _____no _____D/K

20. As a result of your RSVP work, do you find yourself more aware of current events? _____yes _____no _____Don't know

If you wish, please feel free to comment on how RSVP volunteer experiences have affected your lifestyle:

Thank you for your time and valuable contributions in this survey. Please send this completed survey to the RSVP office is the self addressed envelope provided, or turn it in at selected volunteer sites or nutrition centers. If you have any questions, please call the RSVP office at 252-0343.

APPENDIX C

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

BY LISA J. BRAUN
Program Coordinator

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program receives requests for volunteers from about 120 non-profit or licensed health care facilities. The following is a listing of some of the available volunteer opportunities in the St. Cloud area.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB: Volunteers are needed to cut out wooden objects for children at the Kidstop Programs to decorate. Material provided.

ST. CLOUD MANOR: Friendly visitors for residents are welcome anytime.

SALVATION ARMY: Food servers are needed in the Soup Kitchen, Fridays from 11:30 to 1:00 to serve those in need of a hot meal.

STEARNS COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES: Volunteers are needed to serve as friendly visitors for the agency's homebound clients.

WILSON SENIOR DINING SITE: Help wash dishes at the nutrition center any day Monday through Friday from 12:30 to 1:00.

WOMEN'S GUILD: Help those in need by being a sorter on Thursdays between 8:00 and 4:30. Involves sorting clothes as well as client contact.

COUNTRY MANOR NURSING HOME: A volunteer is needed to make necessities and treats available to nursing home residents one day a week. Hours are 8:30 to 11:30. Must have own car.

For more information on these volunteer opportunities or others, contact Lisa at 252-0343. We appreciate your help.

RIDING ALONG WITH RSVP....

BY SUSAN SCHUBERT,
Transportation Coordinator

I feel fortunate to work with a very dedicated group of volunteers that assist the RSVP office with the transportation needs of volunteers. This service is provide to and from the volunteer's home to the volunteer station.

These van drivers, van assistants, and private car drivers give of their time at least once a week (sometimes more) to make it possible for our senior volunteers to get to their volunteer assignments.

I feel these are special people and I want to take this opportunity to thank them. The RSVP staff is glad you have chosen to share your time and talents with us and our volunteers.

Van Drivers: Harry Studer, Ralph Illies, Larry Sullivan, Frank Osfalg, Al Kub, Leo Brennan, Walt Rydberg, Leonard Thielman, Sy Becker, Al Ringsmuth, Jerry Schaefer, Earl Landwehr.

Van Assistant: Al Herzing

Car Drivers: Gil Ziegimeier, Harold Mareck, Ben Rothstein, Sylvan Schreifels, Ray Kiffmeyer

RSVP SAYS THANKS!!!

RSVP VOLUNTEER'S PARTICIPATION URGED!

The Evaluation Committee of the RSVP Advisory Council requests that all RSVP Volunteers participate in this year's evaluation of the Program by completing the survey enclosed in this newsletter. Completed surveys are needed by August 15th. Surveys can be mailed using the envelope provided or they can be dropped off at select Volunteer Stations or Senior Dining Sites.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS CRITICAL TO A SUCCESSFUL EVALUATION!

APPENDIX D

The RSVP Evaluation Committee has requested that all RSVP Volunteers complete a survey which was mailed to them in their RSVP Newsletter. The Volunteers were requested to mail the survey in or to drop it off at selected Volunteer Stations. Since your Agency/Organization utilizes several RSVP volunteers, it would be very helpful if you would place this return box and poster in a place readily accessible to your RSVP Volunteers. Perhaps you would also be willing to encourage the RSVP Volunteers to participate in this survey. I will be picking up the surveys in mid-August.

Thank you.

Jean Januschka Ebnet

Jean Januschka Ebnet
253-6623

TURN IN THE RSVP SURVEYS HERE!

APPENDIX E

FIGURE 1

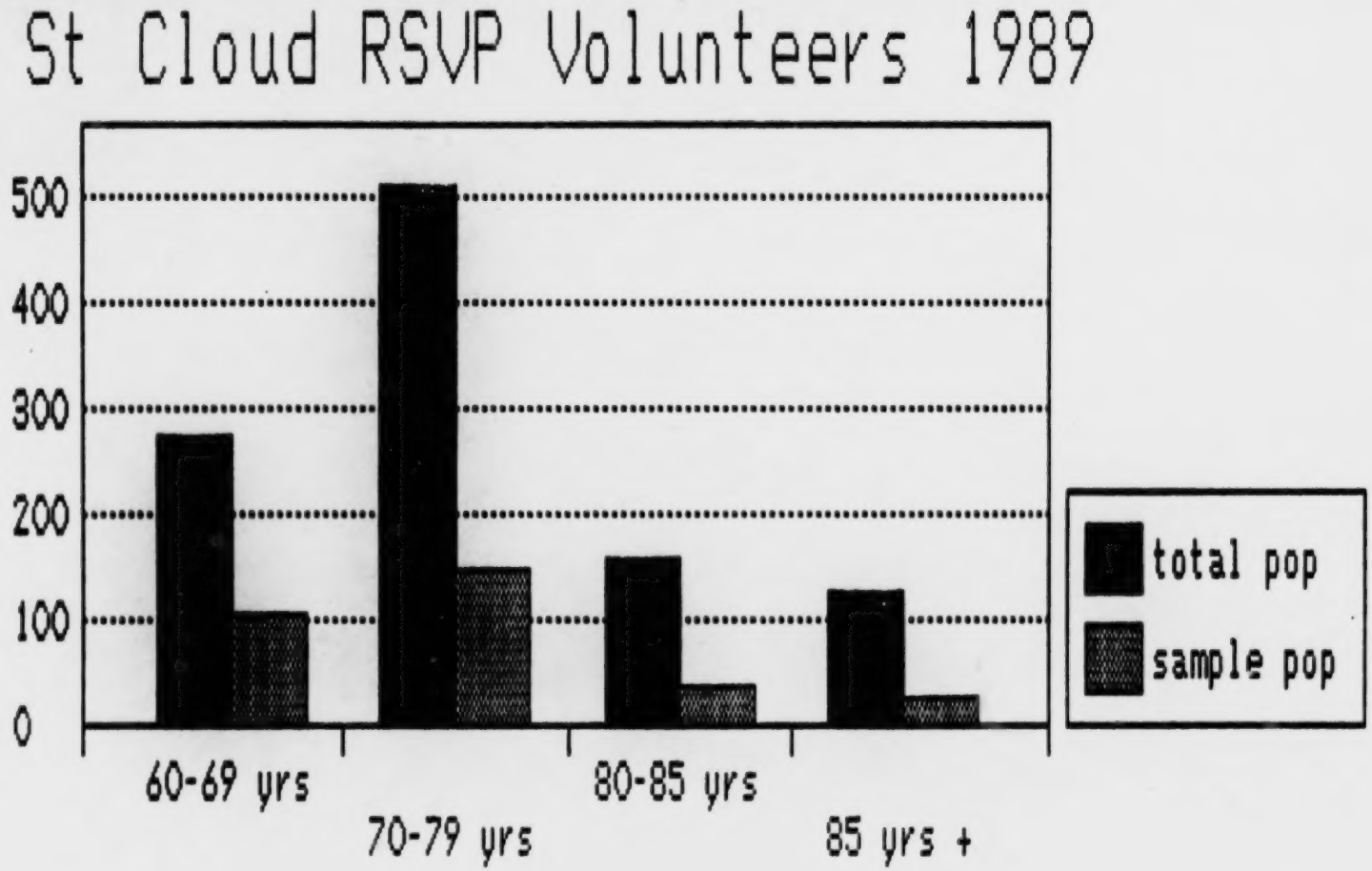


FIGURE 1

Histogram represents a comparison of those RSVP Volunteers who chose to participate in the study (n = 328) with the total RSVP membership (N = 1075); broken down by age.

APPENDIX F

FIGURE 2

St Cloud RSVP Volunteers 1989

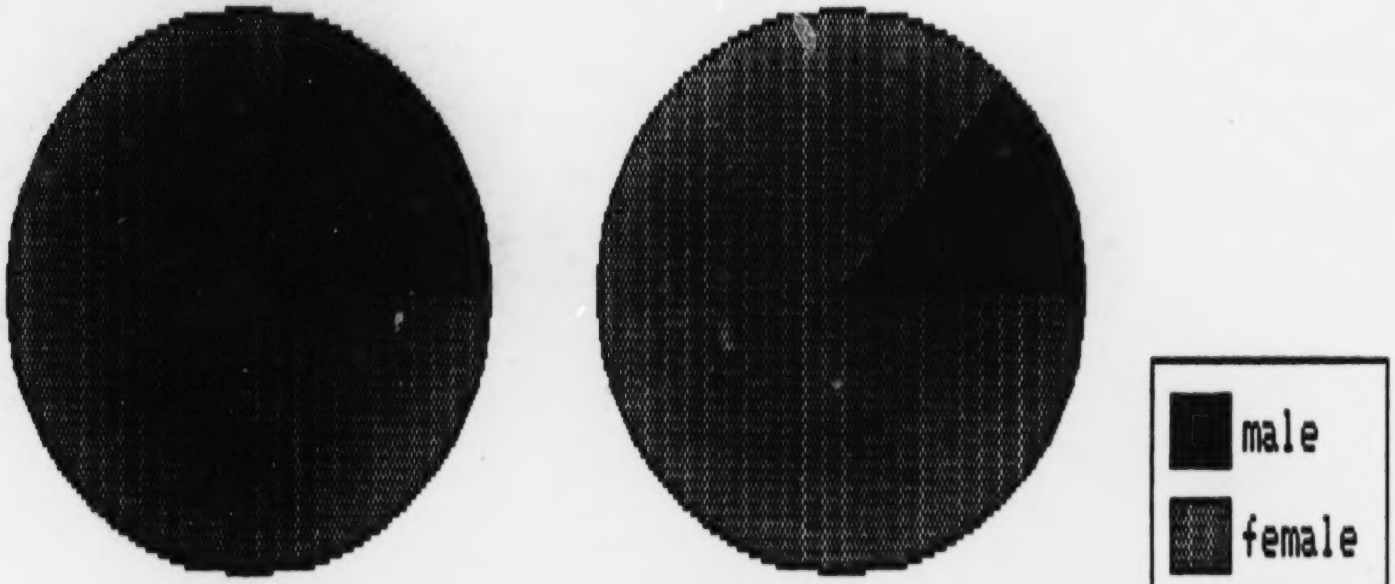


FIGURE 2

Pie Charts represent a comparison of the proportion of the survey sample to the proportion of the total RSVP membership; broken down by gender.

APPENDIX G

TABLE 1

1. To what age group do you belong?

AGE	NUMBER	PERCENT
60-65	44	13%
66-70	71	22%
71-75	66	20%
76-80	80	24%
81-85	36	11%
86-90	24	7%
91-95	4	1%
96 and over	1	1%
No Response	2	1%
Total	328	100%

2. What is your gender?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Female	278	85%
Male	43	13%
No Response	7	2%
Total	328	100%

3. What is your marital status?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Single	34	10%
Married	116	36%
Widowed	170	52%
No Response	8	2%
Total	328	100%

TABLE 1 (continued)

4. What about your education?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
High School	148	45%
Vocational	18	6%
College	63	19%
Graduate School	44	13%
Self	20	6%
No Response	35	11%
Total	328	100%

5. What is/was your occupation?

A variety of occupations were listed, too numerous to mention on this report.

Are you retired?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	293	89%
No	16	5%
No Response	19	6%
Total	328	100%

6. How long have you been an RSVP Volunteer (approximately)?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Less 1 year	27	8%
1-5 years	130	40%
5-10 years	96	29%
Over 10 years	73	22%
No Response	2	1%
Total	328	100%

TABLE 1 (continued)

7. How many hours (on average) do you volunteer each week?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Less 2 Hours	40	12%
2-4 Hours	144	44%
5-10 Hours	102	31%
10 Plus	28	9%
No Response	14	4%
Total	328	100%

8. Are you in good health?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	250	76%
No	34	10%
Don't Know	25	8%
No Response	19	6%
Total	328	100%

9. As an RSVP volunteer has your health improved?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	100	31%
No	93	28%
Don't Know	107	33%
No Response	28	8%
Total	328	100%

TABLE 1 (continued)

10. Are your RSVP volunteer activities satisfying?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	313	96%
No	3	1%
Don't Know	8	2%
No Response	4	1%
Total	328	100%

11. Has your RSVP volunteer work increased your circle of friends?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	281	86%
No	28	9%
Don't Know	14	4%
Know Response	5	1%
Total	328	100%

12. Has your RSVP volunteer work increased your sense of self worth?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	273	83%
No	23	7%
Don't Know	26	8%
No Response	6	2%
Total	328	100%

TABLE 1 (continued)

13. Is the time spent in RSVP volunteer activities worth while?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	317	97%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	7	2%
No Response	4	1%
Total	328	100%

14. Has your RSVP volunteer work helped you meet new people?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	303	92%
No	15	5%
Don't Know	3	1%
No Response	7	2%
Total	328	100%

15. Has your RSVP volunteer work helped you become more active in your community?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	207	63%
No	56	17%
Don't Know	49	15%
No Response	16	5%
Total	328	100%

TABLE 1 (continued)

16. Have RSVP activities provided more opportunity for sharing ideas and information with others?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	247	75%
No	29	9%
Don't Know	39	12%
No Response	13	4%
Total	328	100%

17. As a result of your RSVP activites are you more positive about the future?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	182	56%
No	39	12%
Don't Know	86	26%
No Response	21	6%
Total	328	100%

18. As a result of your RSVP activities do you plan more for the future?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	146	44%
No	86	26%
Don't Know	81	25%
No Response	15	5%
Total	328	100%

TABLE 1 (continued)

19. Does your RSVP work enable you to use more of your skills and abilities?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	237	72%
No	43	13%
Don't Know	38	12%
No Response	10	3%
Total	238	100%

20. As a result of your RSVP work, do you find yourself more aware of current events?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	233	71%
No	41	13%
Don't Know	40	12%
No Response	14	4%
Total	328	100%

APPENDIX H

COMMENTS ON HOW RSVP VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES HAVE AFFECTED LIFESTYLES:

I have met many people and made friends with a few. I feel appreciated.

I look forward to doing this RSVP work. It helps to occupy much of my time and the fellowship of other people is wonderful.

After years of volunteering I am a little tired of it. My legs and knees hurt bad because of arthritis and yet I help. A lot of older women and younger than me do nothing, we wait on them. I'm disgusted and feel I may quit volunteering. We don't get enough out of it.

The need to reach those adults who do not know how to read is something most people are ignorant about. I hope I can help a few to better themselves.

Being a widow I enjoy working and being with people as I was in business for 26 years and being with people and working with people is my lifestyle.

Kept me motivated.

More fun and a better chance to know what is going on in the city. I think people are spending to much money to enjoy themselves. It doesn't take money to do the small things one enjoys.

Sharing time and abilities with others and past experiences has been a very satisfying and rewarding experience.

I have become more out going and like to meet people and enjoyed the volunteer work I have been doing.

Feel good about myself.

I feel I'm making better use of time and feel rewarded if I can bring a smile to some sad faces.

I had surgery so couldn't volunteer for 6 months, but I missed it very much. I get a great satisfaction from being of help to the older handicapped people.

I would never have realized that there are so many people in the nursing homes and that they are in such bad shape and that our performances are appreciated so greatly.

It hasn't changed too much, I enjoy getting out each week to help at the Nutrition Center in Big Lake but can't do too much more.

The reason I do not volunteer more hours for RSVP is because I'm very active in our Big Lake Lioness Club and we're also busy with volunteer work.

I know that a certain two days a week I will be out of my apartment and visiting with other tenants as they come by.

It has made me aware of the fact no matter your age you are still needed in the community.

I'll be back and in past enjoyed every minute.

I thoroughly enjoy the 4 hours each week at St. Joseph's school in Waite Park aiding a first grade teacher. I've done this for 8 years and will continue to do do. I look forward each week to my time spent there.

We both look forward to the first week of the month so we can deliver meals in Sauk Rapids. These people are the greatest!! I love them all and they give me a big lift everytime I see them.

It's great.

I like the feeling of being useful.

I enjoy volunteer work very much. It makes me feel needed and helpful. It gives me an opportunity to share my time, fun and laughter with others. I plan on getting more involved in the next year.

I've learned much more about activities for senior citizens through RSVP. I feel that I should try another place to work and can't decide where.

I either need a new volunteer job or a payed job-about 6 or 8 hours a week.

It has given me a better understanding of people and their needs. I have learned that it doesn't take much to make someone feel better, a smile or hand clasp. I enjoy playing cards and games with them or going shopping.

I enjoy working with RSVP serving Waite Park.

I'm a volunteer at the nursing home. I feel I'm a far more outgoing person than I would be if I just stayed home. I'm more thankful for my good health, I'm more interested in how I look and dress better. I really believe it helps me feel younger.

No change, get along alright.

I get out more and make new friends. I live alone and RSVP helps to pass the time with something different to do.

It makes you more active.

I love to visit people - they make us feel welcome. I wish I could have been an RSVP volunteer when I was younger.

When my aged wife passed away they gave me more jobs to help me overcome my loneliness and grief.

I enjoy it and try to get others to do the same. I live in an apartment there is a lot of lonesome people.

Keeps me going - interested in life, people and activities. Satisfies my serving others and my being served.

It's like therapy for me and gives me a happier slant on life in my old age. In other words it did me as much good as I gave.

I needed to get out of the house and volunteering has helped me to do this. Also to meet more people and gain friends. I hope to put in more hours someday as I get more time to do so.

I get satisfaction out of knowing I am needed and being able to fulfill that need.

Have some health problems, not effected by volunteering. Probably helped me to be active.

Made me more outgoing.

It has made me more outgoing. Also volunteering at the nursing home makes one feel very lucky.

During my teaching career I had the opportunity to work with children. After I retired I worked on the other side of the spectrum, namely the sick and older people. It was a great challenge, but interesting. Not sorry the work I have completed.

I love giving of my time to help other people who are in need.

I'm glad that I can make my cards and knit the mittens in my home as my eating problems prevent me from working away from home much as I'd like to. Also, at home I can work in my own hours which sometimes are late at night as I am a night person.

I'm not as fearful of driving to new places or finding new addresses. I feel that what I'm doing may help to keep our taxes down. I'm really enjoying meeting new people that I otherwise would never have had contact with.

I'm not a bit bored, sometimes nearly too busy.

Since retirement it is a great and rewarding way to spend that extra time one has now - we need to keep busy after a lifetime of work and busy time.

It's a good feeling to be able to help out those in need especially if they appreciate it as most of them do by thank yous.

My feeling is that my volunteer work has given me the opportunity to work and be with younger people. Being with younger people gives an older person an uplifting experience. Older people should not always be with older people.

More active in the community.

I enjoy being with people who know how it is to be alone.

Still makeing adjustments of being a widow.

Volunteering is something we enjoy and will do more whenever we can.

RSVP is good for me meeting and time volunteering is my social life.

It keeps me busy, because I also help others and have a big yard, garden and house to take care of by myself, besides poor health.

Days seem shorter when you're busy. More new friends. Feel better mentally. Enjoy sharing my time with others. Days more pleasant.

RSVP work gets me out of the house on a regular basis. Sometimes it fills a need of talking to others that would not be otherwise met. I enjoy helping others in a direct way.

I enjoy working with others.

It has made me more aware of the needs of others less able. Giving of oneself has made me feel better even though what I do is not a great deal.

Gives me more to look forward to each month.

Just that it has improved my skills.

It's something to look forward to and very enjoyable.

Gives me something to do. I feel it is worthwhile, I feel I'm contributing something and I'm helping other people which makes me feel good.

Am glad if I can help others.

Have not been in long enough time to really be able to tell.

At ninety it makes me feel younger to be able to visit and wait on people much younger than me.

Meet new interesting people and converse with them what they did in their lifetime. Look forward to different entertainment. RSVP office staff are always so nice.

I feel good giving a hand to others that need a hand. Good to be busy and look forward to seeing new found friends.

We get up earlier on the days we do volunteer work - times goes fast when I'm busy.

You retire, the grandchildren grow up and need you less. Along comes RSVP makes you feel needed again. Gives your ego a lift and your busy once again.

Has made me feel useful.

Very rewarding. RSVP volunteering has helped me to adjust to living alone in an apartment and in a different area. I truly feel it has done more for me than the time I have given.

Keeps me busy, something to look forward to. Love people. Good pastime.

RSVP has improved my mental health. I have no reason to be depressed. It has also made me aware of the talents of others and appreciative of the many kinds of talents people have and how other volunteers give of themselves. It rubs off on others.

Energizing - Vitalizing are the adjectives I would use about volunteering.

I'm more friendly with other people. I'm not shy like I was. I'm not afraid to try a new project any more. It makes me feel important, and I love doing what I'm helping with at the nutrition site.

My volunteering has helped to keep me busy. I have met many people.

More friends. Use time other then sitting doing fancy work.

I think volunteer work is very good for older people. It gives them a feeling of self worth, and also the opportunity to make new friends.

Keeps you out of the rocking chair.

Our singing group gains much satisfaction from the audience reaction when we sing what they know - do acts, simple, funny, arouse them to action, get them to join in.

Through RSVP I'm still contributing to my community. It helps me to feel worthwhile not just spinning my wheels.

Make me get up and go. Give more of myself and gives me much satisfaction. Does something inside of me. Makes me more aware and alert.

Enjoy it very much. I love meeting new people.

I am not so busy at home and enjoy spending a few hours volunteering. Other workers become friends, someone to lunch with etc. I enjoy it very much.

Well, I was beginning to develop dishpan hands. Now I kind of look forward to my job at the Women's Guild, and some say my earnings are building up in that celestial savings account in the sky!

To help others and share.

Have helped others all my life where help was needed.

I enjoy working with people and being around them.

I had been widowed 2 years and was so depressed and felt like doing nothing. I became involved with RSVP. Just getting out with other people gave one something to look forward to. Now my days can be filled with volunteer work or just keeping in contact with other people. The feeling of being needed is important and I found I have more potential for a variety of required jobs than I had in years. Thank you RSVP.

With my volunteer work I have received much more than I have given.

After I retired I just sat and watched TV. I began to think there's more to life than this so I started to volunteer, and found out it was rewarding and fun. I began to live again.

I was very depressed and feeling sorry for myself until I started volunteering. Now I am looking forward to getting out each day and helping others in nursing homes and in our nutrition center and the schools in the fall. I think I am now a very positive person and much happier.

I enjoy doing work I have not been able to do before RSVP.

It has kept me from being a couch potatoe. Instead of sitting around doing nothing, I'm among people who are active and this keeps me active too.

I enjoy working with the ladies I work with. I enjoy the day away from home. After seeing what you see and hear at the soup kitchen glad to get back home. I like working with food.

Bot to meet more people.

I have made many new and good friends which is a satisfying feeling. Everyone should try volunteer work for peace of mind and body.

Gave me more people, able to exchange ideas with friends, kept up with current events and feel useful in community.

I don't feel sorry for myself after seeing and working with people in nursing. By doing volunteer work I met a very nice man we married and are very happy. We volunteer together and never have time when we can't find something to keep us busy.

I'm kept more busy as I volunteer at Waite Park Nursing Home going with residents to Dr., Dentist, hospital etc. Also call bingo on Wednesdays.

Because of where I volunteer I'm more aware of the elderly and understand more about their concerns and feeling of lonliness etc.

Its nice to get out of the house and mingle with the other ladies. I look forward to Wednesdays.

I feel that I have become important in the lives of some nursing home residents who count on my services as a reader and wheeling them to and from the dining room. Visiting has become a priority to some also.

I'm meeting other people, I have made new friends, really nice people. I feel I could be doing something more productive than I am at present in my volunteering

For one things it forces you to get up, which you might not do other wise, and as a result you'd sleep later and get inactive.

It has taken up a few hours of loneliness. I am trying to find some evening work to help take up some more of my lonely hours. Not much activity in the community but am active in church.

Being a volunteer is rewarding. I feel I'm helping in some way and it gets me out of the house.

It has helped me to be more concerned about others, those less fortunate than I.

My volunteer work has given me a good reason for living. As a widow whose grown children are scattered, I have too much time alone. Being able to go and volunteer has helped my own morals, selfish? Probably, but I'm thankful for the opportunities!

It has made moving to a new home and town easier. Lived in farming town over 25 years and also volunteered there so missed my friends and coworkers.

I truely enjoy the volunteering I do for special events.

I enjoy it all.

It's been a very nice side line. I have not done much the last 8-9 months as my wife passed away, but am getting back into it more and more again.

I really enjoy it. I go about 3 days a week for about 2 hours. It makes me feel better when I keep busy.

Keeps me busy.

Am at the Heritage Center where I find the staff cordial and stimulating. I feel I am making a contribution here. Also want to get involved in the Whitney Senior Center--time!! Thank you for getting me started in all this!

The RSVP volunteer experience enabled me to continue in the work I enjoyed during my life. Especially appreciated are the RSVP transportation services. I feel happy and proud of the 12,000 hours I have given.

I enjoy my volunteer work at the Nursing Home and Senior Center.

I taught school for 20 years, and when I retired in 1974, I wanted to keep in touch with schools, so I started to do volunteer work. This has given me a feeling of being useful and a feeling of being still on the active list.

Made many friends.

I believe I have become more outgoing.

Sure keeps me busy. Gets me out of the home more. RSVP is a good reason to get going in the morning. Don't have so many dull moments.

The work maintains my positive self image and self worth. Some early Saint once said, "The Glory of God is a person fully alive." Volunteer work helps me to be such a person. Thank you.

Helps keep me busy!!!

Before becoming an RSVP volunteer I was withdrawn. This has helped me become more outgoing. Much more confident of myself. Enjoy and look forward to the days I volunteer.

The situation is probably different here, since we care for the aged Sisters here. This is fine, but I would like to get more Sisters to join RSVP because there are others who help but not recognized in this way.

It keeps me so busy, and made so many friends and hope I can do it for a long time.

I gain much more than I give; I love my volunteer "career".

More satisfying contacts with others. Have a more positive attitude. Like myself more. Look forward to every new day. Have a more active physical life.

APPENDIX I

FIGURE 3

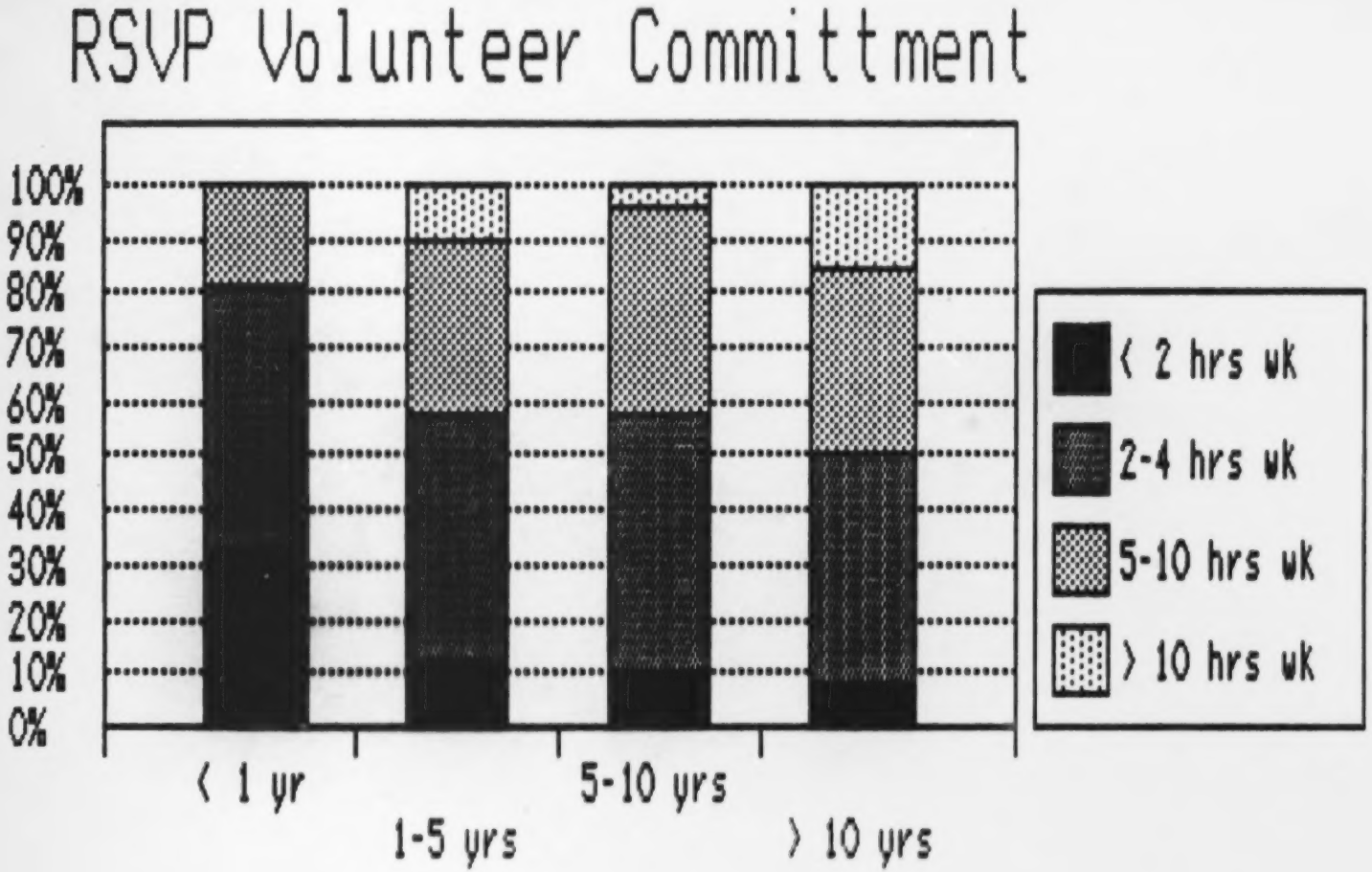


FIGURE 3

Stacked Histogram demonstrates the comparative proportion of hours worked per week (commitment) with total years involved (affiliation) for the entire Sample n = 328.

APPENDIX J

FIGURE 4

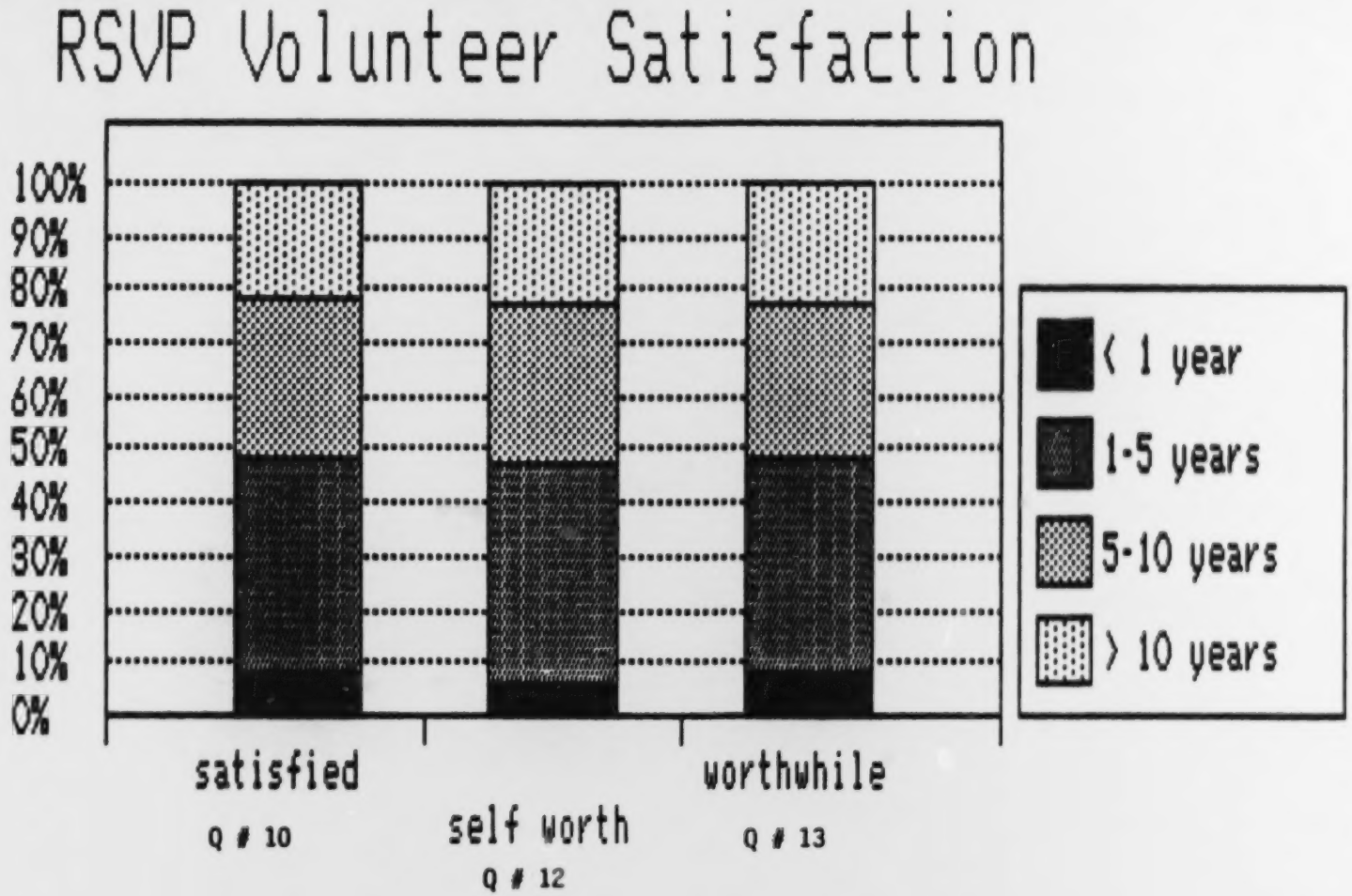


FIGURE 4

Stacked Histogram demonstrates the comparative proportion of affiliation for each of the questions in the satisfaction scale. Only responsents who answered each of the questions "yes" are included in this figure.

FIGURE 5

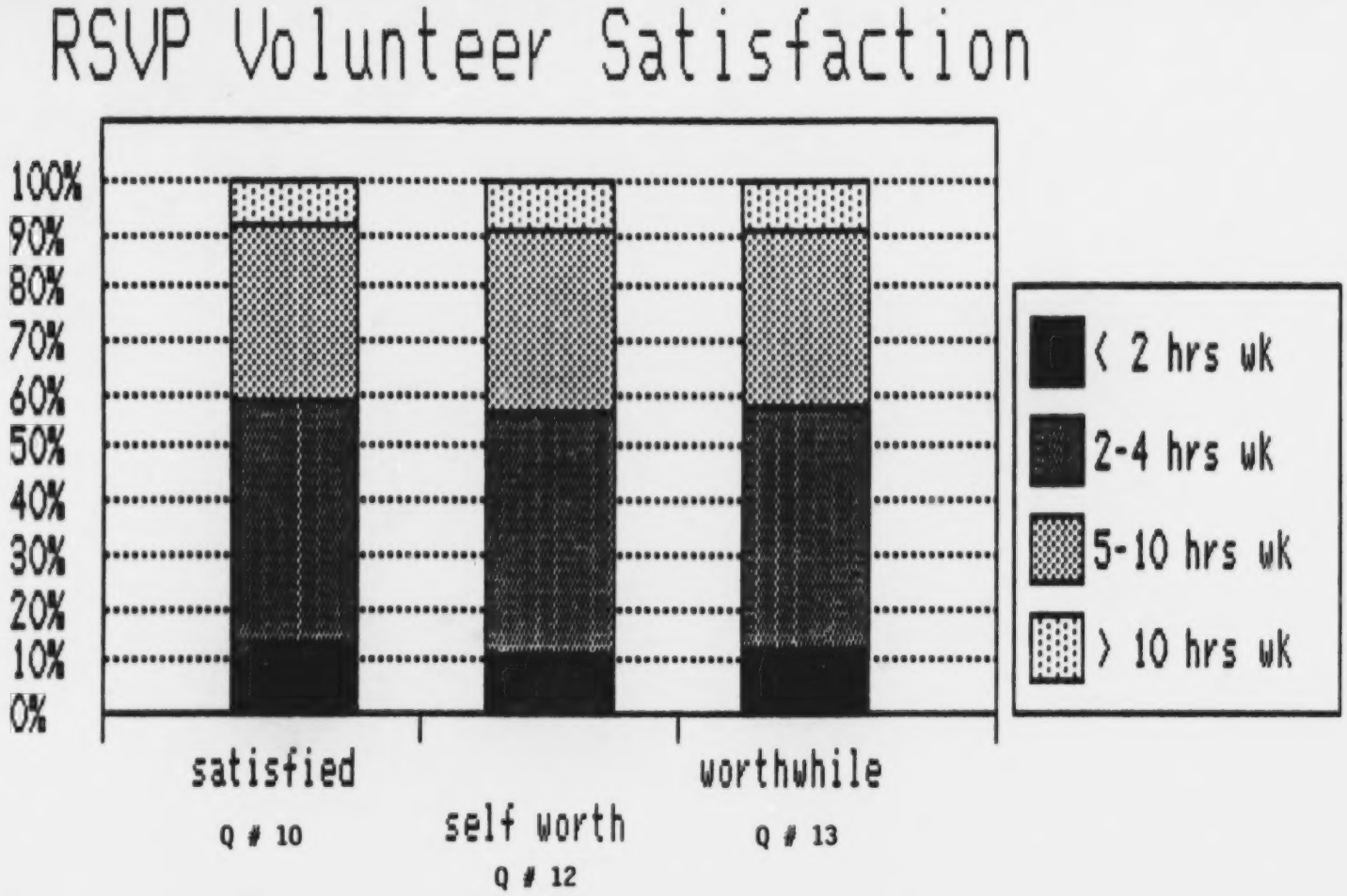


FIGURE 5

Stacked Histogram demonstrates the comparative proportion of commitment for each of the questions in the satisfaction scale. Only respondents who answered each of the questions "yes" are included in this figure.

APPENDIX K

FIGURE 6

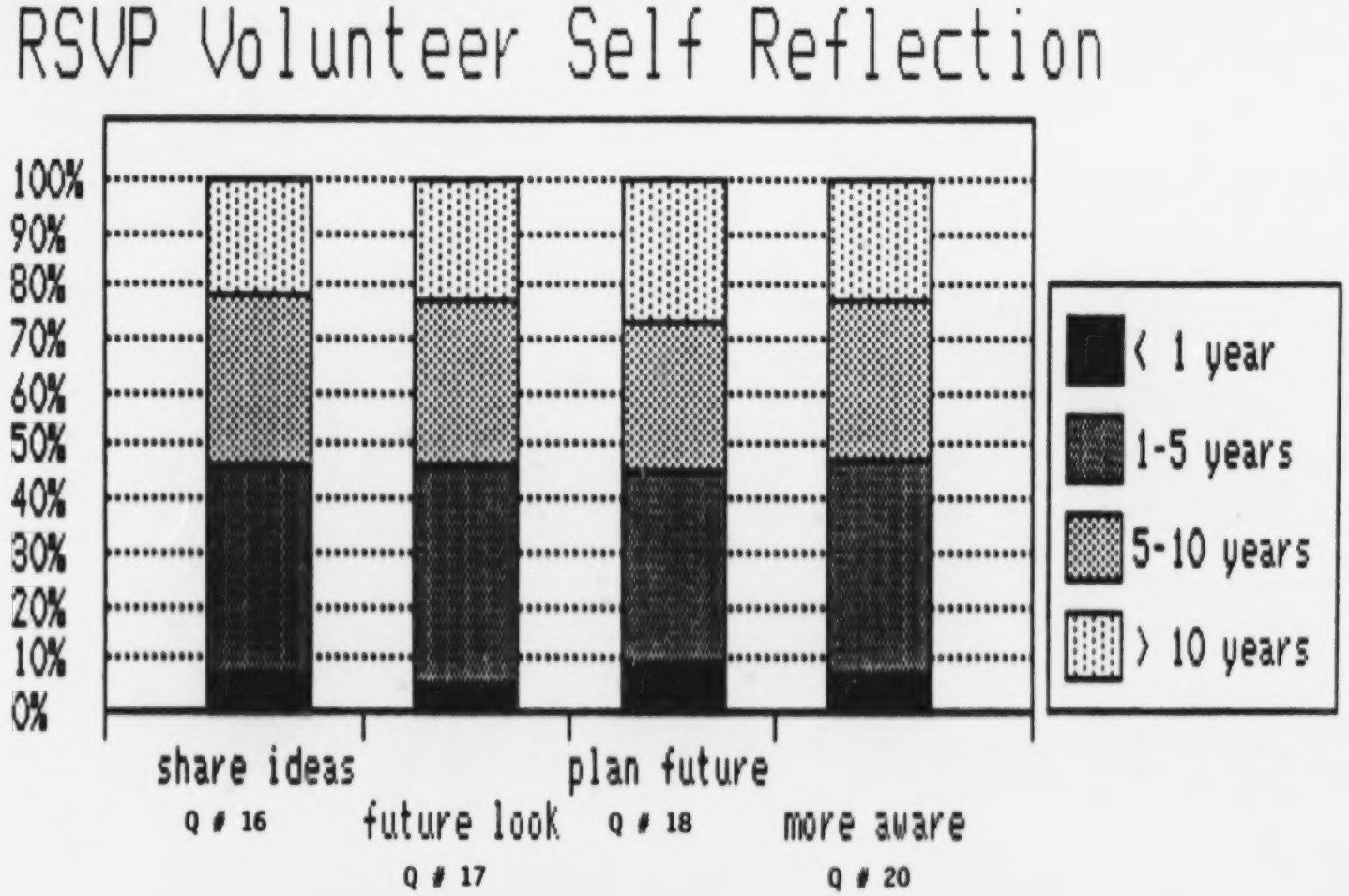
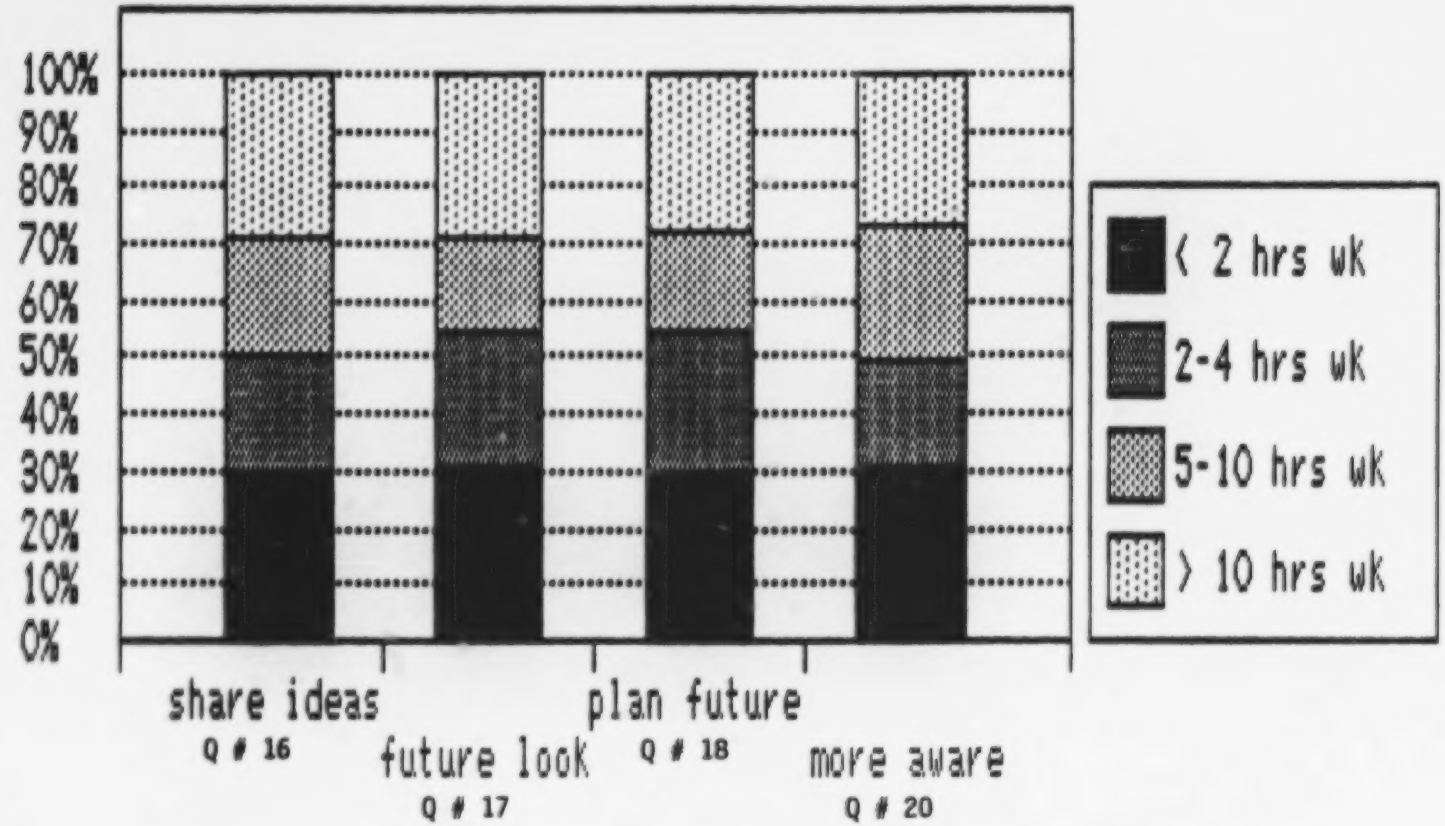


FIGURE 6

Stacked Histogram demonstrates the comparative proportion of affiliation for each of the questions in the self-reflection scale. Only respondents who answered each of the questions "yes" are included in this figure.

FIGURE 7

RSVP Volunteer Self Reflection



Stacked Histogram demonstrates the comparative proportion of commitment for each of the questions in the self-reflection scale. Only respondents who answered each of the questions "yes" are included in this figure.

FIGURE 7

APPENDIX L

FIGURE 8

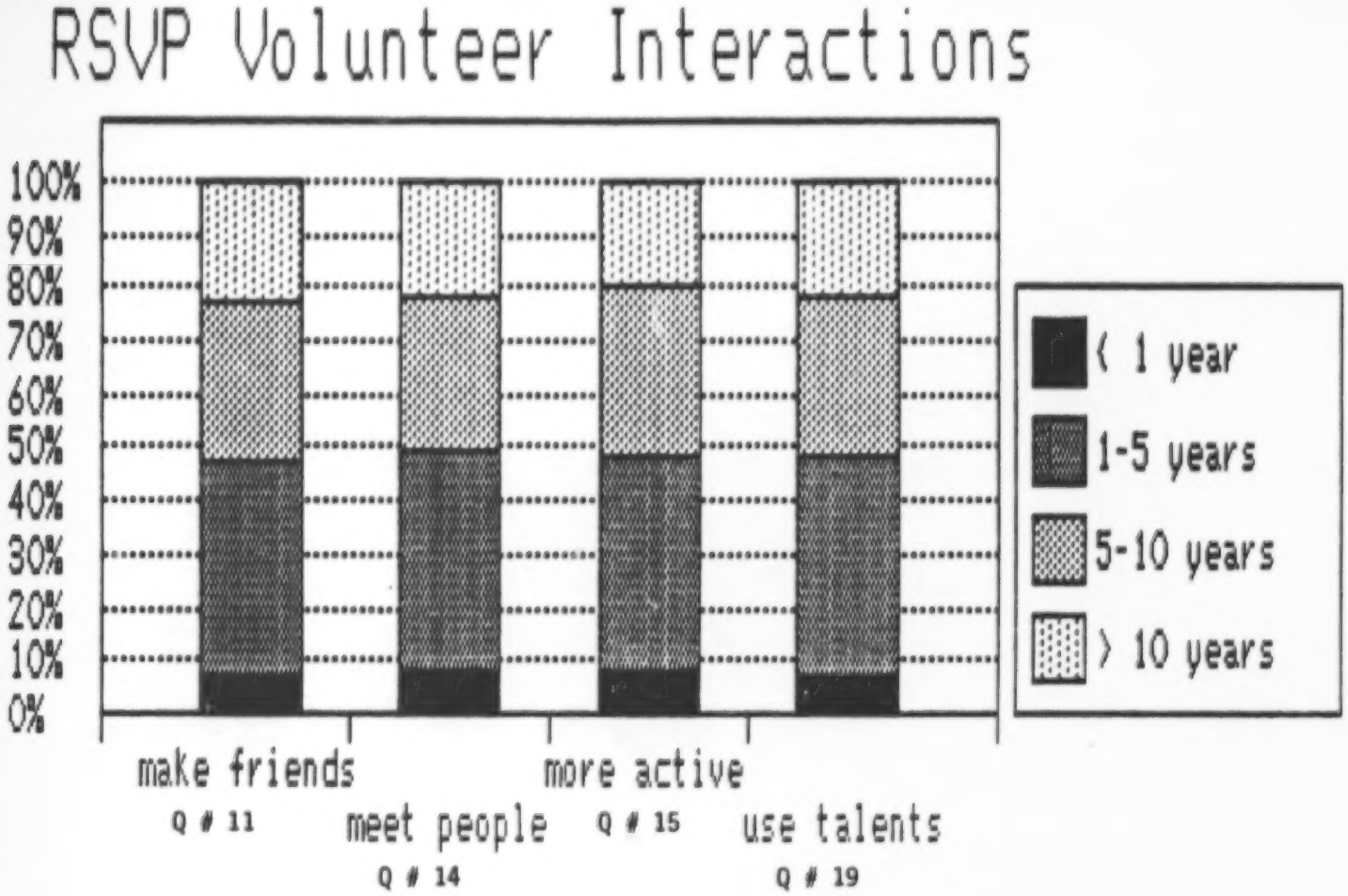


FIGURE 8

Stacked Histogram demonstrates the comparative proportion of affiliation for each of the questions which make up the Social Interaction scale. Only respondents who answered each question "yes" are included in this figure.

FIGURE 9

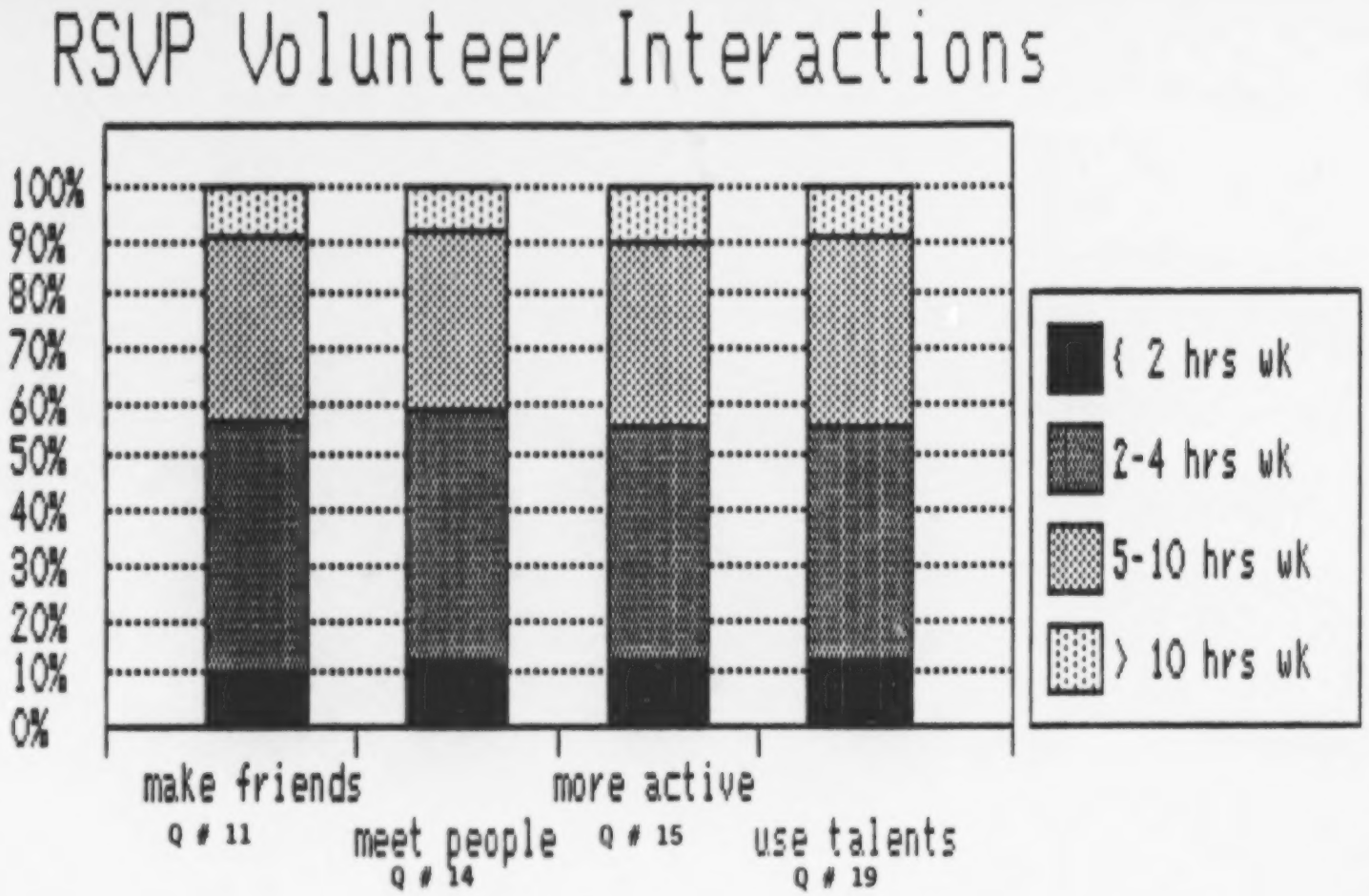


FIGURE 9

Stacked Histogram demonstrates the comparative proportion of commitment for each of the questions which make up the Social Interaction scale. Only respondents who answered each question "yes" are included in this figure.